

# Why Can't I Style it Wild and Free?

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## DEDICATION

This story is dedicated to all “curly girls” who are learning how to appreciate the uniqueness of their afro-textured hair.







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“Put your hat on your head before you leave”, Mom said, as I got ready to play outside in the snow.

I really did not want to wear a hat. I wanted my curls to be wild and free. However, I learned my lesson last winter when I spent my days playing in the snow with my curls stretched upward toward the sun and exposed to the cold dry air...



...Making that snow fort was awesome! I used an old plastic container to create perfect rectangles and stacked each block, one on top of the other. My friend, Aaliyah, joined me as we built the walls higher and higher but...she kept her hat on her head.



At the end of our day's activities, we waved good-bye to each other and into the house I skipped, joyful about our snowy fun! When Momma saw me, she asked:

“Why didn’t you wear your hat outside today?”

I lowered my head sheepishly and responded, “I wanted my curls to be wild and free!”

Momma shook her head in dismay and silently walked away. I knew that I should have listened but keeping my curls uncovered was so much fun! I loved the way the cold wind felt as it blew through my hair.



The next day, Aaliyah and I went outside to play again. I could hear Momma trying to slide the frozen window open and I knew what she was going to ask...

A little voice inside my head told me to wear my hat BUT... playing in the frosty snow with my curls wild and free was so much fun! I DID NOT want to wear my winter hat.

That day, Aaliyah and I built a snowman, a snow boy, a snow girl and a snow baby! It was so much work but so much fun and having my curls wild and free made it all worth it!



At bedtime, I could hear Momma say:

“Don’t forget to wear your winter hat tomorrow.”

I smiled to myself as I drifted off to sleep. I thought about another fun-filled day in the snow.



I woke up the next day to the bright sunshine gleaming through my window. Oh how I loved winter vacation. Two weeks of playtime was so much fun!

Momma hummed a tune as she switched on her computer to start her day's work at the firm:

"Do not forget to wear your winter hat outside today, Tanya".

"Ok, Momma", I replied as I went in search of my hat that I had placed somewhere in my toy box. When I eventually found it, I realized just how beautiful it was! It was yellow and white, to match my ski jacket and ski pants. It was also lined with soft yellow satin to protect my hair from friction and moisture loss.



After breakfast, I got ready for the great outdoors. I slipped my yellow and white winter hat onto my head and stepped outside into the cold winter air. I felt so much warmer BUT...I wanted my curls to be wild and free!

As I raced down the street to knock on Aaliyah's house door, I slipped my hat off my head.

When I arrived, Aaliyah's mom, Mrs. Sommerville, took one look at me and sternly asked:

"Why aren't you wearing your winter hat?"

"Oh, I want my curls to be wild and free!" I replied with a BIG smile.



“Okay. Have it your way”, Mrs. Sommerville murmured as she turned to get Aaliyah.

Standing at the doorway of the house, I could hear Mrs. Sommerville say:

“Aaliyah, do not forget to wear your winter hat today.”

“Okay, Mom”, Aaliyah responded before we raced down the street together.



Unlike me, Aaliyah wore her hat securely on her head.

“You should wear your winter hat, Tanya”, she turned to me and said, when she realized that I had stuffed my winter hat inside my pocket. I ignored Aaliyah’s suggestion and continued to play in the snow. I wanted my curls to be wild and free.

“Suit yourself!” Aaliyah responded as she tossed a snowball at me with a giggle.

We spent the rest of the afternoon, chasing each other and throwing snowballs. There was nothing like that feeling of having my curls wild and free on a cold snowy day!



When springtime rolled around, I was so alarmed when I discovered that my hair was shorter than it had been the year before. Momma saw the obvious disappointment on my face and said:

“I suppose you thought your lovely curls would be flowing beyond your shoulders?”

I nodded my head sadly as she explained why she reminded me to wear my hat all winter long.

“You see Tanya, Afro-textured hair needs humidity to remain healthy and strong. The winter months in Canada tend to be cold and dry. As a result, our tresses become brittle and prone to breakage if we do not keep them covered with a satin-lined hat while we are outside.”





I think you can guess what I did this winter when I went outside to play with Aaliyah...

